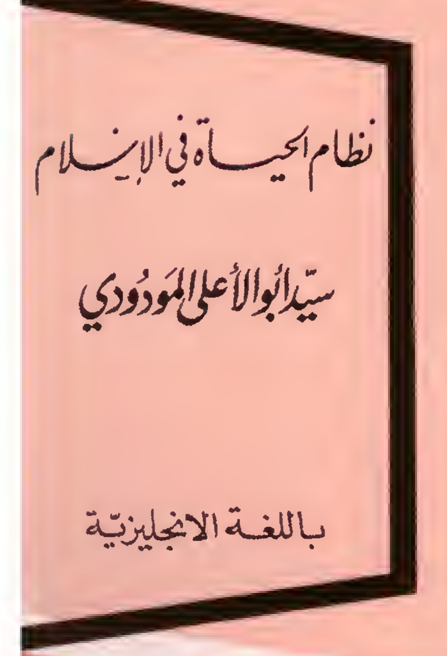
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Islamic Way of Life

SAYYID ABUL A'LA MAUDUDI

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Islamic Way of Life

by
SAYYID ABUL A'LA MAUDUDI

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I.I.F.S.O.

١٧

نظام الحياة في الإسلام

سيّد أبو الأعلى المودودي

باللغة الإنكليزية

الاتحاد الإسلامي العالمي للمنظمات الطلابية

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PREFACE

In January-March 1948 Maulana Abul A'la Maududi gave five radio talks on different aspects of the Islamic way of life. Islamic Research Academy is presenting in the form of the present book the English version of these talks. A new introductory chapter has been added on the Islamic concept of life so that the reader may be oriented to appreciate the salient features of the moral, political, social and economic teachings of Islam. This chapter has been compiled from different writings of the author.

"Islamic Way of Life" is in the nature of a first introduction to the Islamic scheme of individual and social life. Those who are interested in pursuing the subject further are requested to read other works of the author which deal with the subject exhaustively and which have been referred to by the Editor in his footnotes. The Editor is indebted to his friend M. Z. for helping him in revising the translation.

I have taken the opportunity of further revising and improving the text of the translation in this new edition. I am thankful to those friends and critics who pointed out some lapses of expression and editing. The response which this book has evoked has encouraged us immensely. It has been acclaimed as one of the best primary introductions to Islam. We hope that it will continue to serve the cause of Islam and show the Right Path to the seekers after truth.

Karachi, KHURSHID AHMAD
19th Sept., 1967.

Chapter I

ISLAMIC CONCEPT OF LIFE[1]

THE chief characteristic of Islamic ideology is that it does not admit a conflict, nay, not even a significant separation between life-spiritual and life-mundane. It does not confine itself merely to purifying the spiritual and the moral life of man in the limited sense of the word. Its domain extends to the entire gamut of life. It wants to mould individual life as well as the social order in healthy patterns, so that the Kingdom of God may really be established on the earth and so that peace, contentment and well-being may fill the world as waters fill the oceans. The Islamic way of life is based on this unique approach to life and a peculiar concept of man's place in the universe. That is why it is necessary that before we proceed to discuss the moral, social, political and economic systems of Islam, we should have a clear idea of the Islamic concept of life.

There are certain basic postulates which should be understood and appreciated at the very outset. These postulates are as follows:

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1. This chapter has been compiled in its present form by selections from the writings of Maulana Maududi.—*Editor.*

I

BASIC POSTULATES

1. God, Who is the Creator, the Ruler and the Lord of the universe created man and provided him with temporary station in that part of His vast kingdom (cosmos) which is known as the earth. He has endowed man with the faculties of thinking and understanding, and has given him the power to distinguish right from wrong. Man has also been invested with freedom of will and choice and the power to use the resources of the world in any manner he likes. In short, man has been given a sort of autonomy while being appointed God's vicegerent on the earth.

2. Before assigning to man the vicegerency on the earth, God made it explicitly clear to him that He alone is the Lord, the Ruler and the Deity. As such the entire universe and all the creatures in it (including man) must submit to Him alone. Man must not think himself totally free and should know that this earth is not his permanent abode. He has been made to live upon it only during the period of his probation, and in due course, he will return to his Lord, to be judged according to the way he has utilized the period of probation. The only right course for man is to acknowledge Allah as the only Lord, the Sustainer and the Deity and to follow His Guidance and His Commands in all walks of life. Man must live this life with the realization that he is to be judged and his sole objective should be to

merit the pleasure of Allah so as to emerge successful in the final test. Conduct which is contrary to this would lead man astray. If man follows the course of piety and Godliness (which he is *free* to choose and follow) he will succeed in this world and in the next: in this world he will live a life of peace and contentment, and in the here-after he will qualify himself for the heaven of eternal bliss, *al-Jannah*. And if he chooses to follow the other course, i.e., that of Godlessness and evil (which he is equally *free* to choose and follow) his life will be one of corruption, disruption and frustration in this world and he will meet colossal misfortune in the life to come—that abode of pain and misery which is called Hell.

3. After administering this warning, God set man upon the earth and provided the very first human being (Adam[2] and Eve) with His Guidance in accordance with which men were to live on the earth. Thus man's life on this earth did not begin in utter darkness. The very first man was provided with a burning torch of light and guidance so that humanity might attain its glorious destiny. The very first man received revealed knowledge from God Himself. He had knowledge of the reality and was given the code of life by following which he could live a life of bliss and success. This code of life was Islam, *the attitude of complete submission to Allah, the Creator of man and the whole universe*. It was this

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2. According to Islam Adam was the first prophet of Allah on the earth.—*Editor*.

religion which Adam, the first man, passed down to posterity. But later generations gradually drifted away from the right path and adopted different erroneous paths. Because of negligence, they lost the original teachings, or due to folly or mischief they adulterated and perverted them. They associated with God innumerable human beings, non-human objects and imaginary entities as deities and indulged in *shirk* (polytheism) of the worst type. They mixed up the pure teachings of God with strange myths, ideas and philosophies and thus produced a jungle of religions and cults. They discarded the God-given principles of social ethics and collective morality, the *Shari'ah*, and deprived the human life of peace and tranquillity.

4. Although men departed from the path of truth, disregarded and distorted the *Shari'ah* and some of them even revolted against the code of Divine Guidance, yet God did not destroy them or *force them* to the *right course.* Forced conversion to the right path was not in keeping with the autonomy He had given to man. Instead, God *appointed* certain virtuous persons from amongst the people themselves, to discharge responsibility of recalling and guiding men to the right path during their sojourn on the earth. These men believed in God, and lived a life of obedience to Him. He honoured them by his revelations and gave them the knowledge of reality. These men, known as prophets (peace be on all of them), were assigned the task of presenting the message of truth to humanity and of asking the people to come to the path of the Lord.

5. These prophets were raised in all epochs, in all lands and in all nations. Their number exceeds many thousands. All of them brought the same message, all of them advocated the same way of life (*Deen*) i.e., the way which was revealed to man on the first day of his existence. All of them followed the same guidance: the guidance which was prescribed by the Lord for man at the outset of his career on the earth. All of them stood for the same mission: they called men to the religion of Islam, asked those who accepted the Divine Guidance to live in accordance with that and organized them into a movement for the establishment of the Divine Law, and for putting an end to all deviations from the Right Path. Every prophet tried to fulfil this mission in the best possible way. But quite a number of people never accepted their guidance and many of those who accepted it, gradually drifted astray and after a lapse of time, lost the guidance or distorted it through innovations and perversions.

6. At last God raised Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) in the land of Arabia and assigned to him the completion of the mission for which earlier prophets were ordained. The message of Muhammad (peace be upon him) was for the whole of mankind. He presented anew the teachings of Islam in their pristine form and provided humanity once again with the Divine Guidance which they had lost in its original form. He organized all those who accepted his message into one *Ummah* which was charged with reconstructing its own life in accordance with the teachings of Islam,

with calling humanity to the path of righteousness and with establishing the supremacy of the Word of God on the earth. This guidance is enshrined in the Holy Qur'an which constitutes the only right code of conduct for mankind.[3]

II

IMAN: Its Nature and Character

We have discussed above those basic postulates of Islam which, on the one hand, reveal God's scheme for providing guidance to man in this world and, on the other, define the nature, position and status of man in it. Now let us study the foundations on which the Qur'an wants to develop man's relationship with Allah and the concept of life which naturally follows from that relationship.

The Qur'an deals with this problem on many an occasion but the entire concept of life envisaged by it is epitomised in the following verse:

> "Verily Allah hath bought of the believers their lives and their properties for the *price* that theirs shall be the Paradise; so they fight in the way of Allah and slay and are slain. It (i.e. the promise of Paradise) is a covenant which is binding on Him in the *Turah* and the *Injeel* and the *Qur'an*. And who is more faithful unto his covenant than Allah? Rejoice then in your

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3. *Tafheem al-Qur'an*, Vol. I, pp. 16-19.

bargain that ye have made, for that is the supreme triumph."[4]

In the above verse the nature of the relationship which comes into existence between man and God because of *Iman* (the act of reposing faith in Allah) has been called a 'bargain'. This means that *Iman* in Allah is not a mere metaphysical concept; it is in the nature of a *contract* by which man barters his life and his belongings with Allah in exchange for Paradise in the life here-after. God so to say, purchases a believer's life and property and promises, by way of price, the award of Paradise in the life after death. This concept of bargain has important implications and we should, therefore, first of all clearly understand its nature and meaning.

The fact of the matter is that each and every thing in this world belongs to Allah. He is the real owner of them all. As such, man's life and riches, which are part of this world, also belong to Him, because it is He Who created them and it is He Who has assigned them to each man for his use. Looking at the problem from this angle, the question of any sale or purchase does not arise at all. God is the real owner; there is no question of His purchasing what is already His: Man is not their real owner; he has no title to sell them. But there is one thing which has been conferred on man, and which *now* belongs fully to him, and that is his *free will*, the

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4. *Al-Qur'an*, IX : 111.

freedom of choice of following or not following the path of Allah. As man has been endowed with free will in this respect, he is free to acknowledge or not to acknowledge the reality of things. Although this freedom of will and choice that man possesses, does not automatically make him the real owner of all the energies and resources on which he has command, nor does he acquire the title to utilize them in any way he likes, nor his acknowledgement of reality or refusal to do so does in any way affect the reality as such, yet it does mean that he is free to acknowledge the sovereignty of God and His overlordship on his own life and belongings or refuse to acknowledge it and to arrogate to himself the position of total independence. He may, if he so likes, regard himself free from all obligations to the Lord and may think that he enjoys full rights and powers over all that he has, and thus may use them according to his own wishes unfettered by any higher command. It is here that the question of *bargain* comes in. This bargain does not mean that God is purchasing something which belongs to man. Its real nature is this. All creation belongs to God but He has bestowed certain things on man to be used by him as a trust from God. And man has been given freedom to honestly fulfil the trust or if he so likes, to betray it and misuse it. Now God demands that man should willingly and voluntarily (and not under duress or compulsion) acknowledge those things as His which really belong to Him and he should use them as a

trust from God and not as something his own to be used as he pleases. Thus a man who voluntarily renounces the freedom even to refuse God's supremacy and instead acknowledges His sovereignty, so to say, 'sells' his 'autonomy' (which too is a gift from God and not something which man has acquired of his own) to God, and gets in return God's promise of eternal bliss that is Paradise. A man who makes such a bargain is a *Mu'min* (believer) and *Iman* (belief) is the Islamic name for this contract; while the one who chooses not to enter into this contract, or after making such a contract adopts a behaviour in contravention thereof amounting to its gross breach, is a *Kafir* and the attempt to avoid or abrogate this contract is technically known as *Kufr*.

Such is the nature of the contract. Now let us briefly study its various aspects and stipulations.

1. God has put us to serious trial on two counts:

(*a*) He has left man free, but even after giving him that freedom He wishes to see whether or not man realises his true position; whether he remains honest and steadfast and maintains loyalty and allegiance to the Lord, or loses his head and revolts against his own Creator; whether he behaves like a noble soul, or tramples under foot all values of decency and starts playing such fantastic tricks as make

the angels weep.[5]

(*b*) He wants to see whether man is prepared or have such confidence in God as to offer his life and wealth in return for what is a promise, that is to materialise in the next world —and whether he is prepared to surrender his autonomy and all the charms that go with it, in exchange for a promise about the future.

2. It is an accepted principle of Islamic law that *Iman* consists in adherence to a certain set of doctrines and whosoever reposes faith in those doctrines becomes a *Mu'min*. No one has a right to denounce such a man as a non-believer or drive him out of the fold of the *Ummah*, save when there is explicit proof of falsity or of renunciation of the belief. This is the legal aspect of the problem. But in the eyes of the Lord, only that *Iman* is valuable which consists in *complete surrender of one's will and choice to the Will of Allah*. It is a state of thought and action wherein man submits himself fully to Allah, renouncing all claim to his own supremacy. It is something that

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5. The translator has tried to borrow the words of Shakespeare who has beautifully portrayed this attitude of man in the following lines :

Man, proud man
Dressed in little brief authority
Most ignorant of what he's most assured,
His glossy essence—like an angry ape,
Plays such fantastic tricks before heaven,
As make the angels weep. —Shakespeare.
Measure for Measure (Isabella), Act II, Sc. II.

comes from the heart. It is an attitude of the mind and prepares man for a certain course of action. If a man recites the *Kalima*,[6] enters into the contract and even offers his prayers and performs other acts of worship, but in his heart he regards himself as the owner and the sovereign dispenser of his physical and mental powers and of his moral and material resources, uses them to his own liking and upholds his freedom of will, then, however much the people may look upon him as *Mu'min*, in the eyes of God he will be a non-believer, for he has, in fact, not really entered into the bargain which according to the Qur'an is the essence of *Iman*. If a man does not use his powers and resources in the way God has prescribed for him and instead uses them in pursuits which God has prohibited, it clearly shows that either he has not pledged his life and property to Allah, or even after pledging them to Him, he falsifies the pledge by his conduct.

3. This nature of *Iman* makes the Islamic way of life distinct from, nay, the very *opposite of*, the non-Islamic way of life. A Muslim, who has real faith in Allah, makes every aspect of his subservient to the Will of Allah. His entire life is one of obedience and surrender and he never behaves in an arrogant or an autonomous way, save in a moment of forgetfulness. And after such a lapse as soon as he becomes

6. *Kalima* is a statement of the profession of faith and one enters the fold of Islam by pronouncing it. The *Kalima* is : *There is no god but Allah, Muhammad is His Prophet.*

conscious of it, he again re-addresses himself to his Lord and repents his error. Similarly a group of people or a society which consists of true Muslims can never break away from the Law of their Lord. Its political order, its social organization, its culture, its economic policy, its legal system and its international strategy must all be in tune with the Code of Guidance revealed by Allah and must, in no way, contravene it. And if ever through error or omission any contravention is committed, they must, on realizing this, correct this immediately and return forthwith to the state of subservience to the Law of God. It is the way of the non-believers to feel free from God's Guidance and to behave as one's own master. Whoever adopts such a policy, even though he may bear a name similar to that of a Muslim is treading the satanic path and is following the way of the non-believers.

4. The Will of God, which it is obligatory upon man to follow, is the one which God Himself has revealed for man's guidance. The Will of God is not to be determined by man himself. God has Himself enunciated it clearly and there is no ambiguity about it. Therefore, if a person or society is honest and steadfast in its contract with Allah, it must scrupulously fashion its entire life in accordance with the Book of God and the *Sunnah* of the Prophet (peace be upon him).

A little reflection will show that these aspects and stipulations are logically implicit in the bargain and

it is also clear from the above discussion why the payment of the 'price' has been postponed to the life after death. Paradise is not the reward for the *mere profession* of the bargain, it is the reward for the faithful *execution* of the contract. Unless the contract is fully executed and the actual life-behaviour of the 'vendor' complies with the terms of the contract he does not become entitled to the reward. Thus, the final act of the 'sale' is concluded only at the last moment of vendor's life and as such it is natural that the reward should be given to him in the life-hereafter.

There is another significant point which emerges from the study of the verse quoted above when it is real with reference to its context. In the verses preceding it, reference has been made to the people who professed *Iman* and promised a life of obedience, but when the hour of trial came they proved unequal to the task. Some neglected the call of the hour and betrayed the cause. Others played tricks of hypocrisy and refused to sacrifice their lives and riches in the cause of Allah. The Qur'an, after exposing these people and criticising their insincerity makes it clear that *Iman* is a contract, a form of pledge between man and God. It does not consist in a mere profession of belief in Allah. It is an acknowledgement of the fact that Allah alone is our Lord Sovereign and Ruler and that everything that man has, including his life, belongs to Him and must be used in accordance with His directives. If a Muslim adopts a contrary course, he is insincere in his profession of

faith. True believers are only those who have *really* sold their lives and all that they possess to God and who follow His dictates in all fields of activity. They stake their all in obedience to the Commands of the Lord, and do not deviate even an inch from the path of loyalty to God. Such alone are the true believers.[7]

III

THE SCHEME OF LIFE

This discussion makes it clear that Islam begins with laying down the proper lines on which man's relationship with the Lord is to be reared; his entire individual and social life is an exercise in developing and strengthening this relationship. *Iman*, the starting point of our religion, consists in the acceptance of this relationship by man's intellect and will and *Islam* is actual submission, the way of surrender to the Will of God in all aspects of life and behaviour. Now, we are in a position to cast a glance over the scheme of life which Islam envisages. This scheme —the code of conduct—is known as the *Shari'ah*.[8]

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7. Abul A'la Maududi, *Tafheem al-Qur'an*, Vol. II, pp. 235-239.

8. "To follow this code of conduct is the truest and the most consistent attitude for mankind. It sets standards for the orderly behaviour of man both individually and collectively and in respect of the biggest as well as the smallest task he may have to face. Having once accepted the philosophy of life enunciated by 'The Book' and 'The Messenger' as the embodiment of Reality, one has no justification for not obeying God's revealed Guidance in the

(*Contd.*)

Its sources are the Qur'an and the *Sunnah* of the Prophet (peace be upon him).

The Final Book of God and the Final Messenger stand today as the repositories of this truth, and they invite the whole of humanity to accept the truth. God Almighty has endowed man with free-will in the moral domain, and it is to this free-will that this acceptance bears reference. Consequently, it is always an act of volition and not of compulsion. Whosoever agrees that the concept of Reality stated by the Holy Prophet and the Holy Book is true, it is for him to step forward and surrender his will to the will of God. It is this submission which is called '*Islam*', the fructification of faith (*Iman*) in actual life, and those who do so, i.e., those who of their own free-will, accept God as their Sovereign, and surrender to His Divine Will and undertake to regulate their lives

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sphere of one's choice also. This, for a host of reasons, is the most rational approach for man to follow. *Firstly*, the powers and the organs through which our free-will functions, are gifts from God and not the result of our own efforts. *Secondly*, the independence of choice itself has been delegated to us by God and not won by us through our personal endeavour. *Thirdly*, all those things in which our free-will operates are not only the property but also the creation of God. *Fourthly*, the territory in which we exercise our independence and freedom is also the territory of God. *Fifthly*, the harmonisation of human life with the universe dictates the necessity of there being one Sovereign and a common Source of Law for both the spheres of human activity—the voluntary and the involuntary, or, in other words, the moral and the physical. The separation of these two spheres into water-tight compartments leads to the creation of an irreconcilable conflict which finally lands not only the individual but also the nation and the entire humanity in endless trouble and disaster." Maududi, *Islamic Law and Constitution*, Lahore, 1960, p. 49.

in accordance with His Commandments, are called '*Muslims*'.

All those persons who thus surrender themselves to the Will of God are welded into a community and that is how the "Muslim society" comes into being. Thus, this is an ideological society—a society radically different from those which are founded on the basis of race, colour or territory. This society is the result of a deliberate choice and effort ; it is the outcome of a 'contract' which takes place between human beings and their Creator. Those who enter into this contract, undertake to recognize God as their Sovereign, His Guidance as supreme, and His injunctions as absolute law. They also undertake to accept, without question or doubt. His classifications of Good and Evil, Right and Wrong, Permissible and Prohibited. In short, the Islamic society agrees to limit its volition to the extent prescribed by the All-Knowing God. *In other words, it is God and not Man whose Will is the primary Source of Law in a Muslim Society.*

When such a society comes into existence, the Books and the Messenger prescribe for it a code of life called the *Shari'ah*, and this Society is bound to conform to it by virtue of the contract it has entered into. It is, therefore, inconceivable that any Muslim society worth the name can deliberately adopt a system of life other than the *Shari'ah*. If it does so, its contract is *ipso facto* broken and the whole society becomes "un-Islamic".

But we must clearly distinguish between the

everyday sins or violations of the individuals and a deliberate revolt against the *Shari'ah*. The former may not imply breaking up of the contract, while the latter would mean nothing short of that. The point that should be clearly understood here is that if an Islamic society consciously resolves not to accept the *Shari'ah*, and decides to enact its own constitution and laws or borrows them from any other source in utter disregard of the *Shari'ah*. such a society breaks its contract with God and forfeits its right to be called 'Islamic'.

THE OBJECTIVES AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHEME

Let us now proceed to understand the scheme of life envisaged by the *Shari'ah*. To understand that, it is essential that we should start with a clear conception of the objectives and the fundamentals of *Shari'ah*.

The main objective of the *Shari'ah* is to construct human life on the basis of *Ma'rufat* (virtues) and to cleanse it of the *Munkarat* (vices). The term *Ma'rufat* denotes all the virtues and good qualities that have always been accepted as "good" by the human conscience. Conversely, the word *Munkarat* denotes all the sins and evils that have always been condemned by human nature as "evil". In short the *Ma'rufat* are in harmony with human nature and its requirements in general and the *Munkarat* are just

the opposite. The *Shari'ah* gives a clear view of these *Ma'rufat* and *Munkarat* and states them as the norms to which the individual and social behaviour should conform.

The *Shari'ah* does not, however, limit its function to providing us with an inventory of virtues and vices only; it lays down the entire scheme of life in such a manner that virtues may flourish and vices may not pollute and destroy human life.

To achieve this end, the *Shari'ah* has embraced in its scheme all the factors that encourage the growth of good and has recommended steps for the removal of impediments that might prevent its growth and development. This process gives rise to a subsidiary series of *Ma'rufat* consisting of the causes and means initiating and nurturing the good, and yet another set of *Ma'rufat* consisting of prohibitory commands in relation to those things which act as preventives or impediments to good. Similarly, there is a subsidiary list of *Munkarat* which might initiate or allow growth of evil.

The *Shari'ah* shapes the Islamic society in a way conducive to the unfettered growth of good, virtue and truth in every sphere of human activity, and gives full play to the forces of good in all directions. And at the same time it removes all impediments in the path of virtue. Along with this, it attempts to eradicate evils from its social scheme by prohibiting vice, by obviating the causes of its appearance and growth, by closing the inlets through which it creeps

into a society and by adopting deterrent measures to check its occurrence.

Ma'rufat

The *Shari'ah* classifies *Ma'rufat* into three categories: the Mandatory (*Fardh* and *Wajib*), the Recommendatory (*Matlub*) and the Permissible (*Mubah*).

The observance of the mandatory (*Ma'rufat*) is obligatory on a Muslim society and the *Shari'ah* has given clear and binding directions about them. The recommendatory *Ma'rufat* are those which the *Shari'ah* wants that a Muslim society should observe and practise. Some of them have been very clearly demanded of us while others have been recommended by implication and inference from the sayings of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). Besides this, special arrangements have been made for the growth and encouragement of some of them in the scheme of life enunciated by the *Shari'ah*. Others still have simply been recommended by the *Shari'ah* leaving it to the society or to its more virtuous elements to look to their promotion.

This leaves us with the permissible *Ma'rufat*. Strictly speaking, according to the *Shari'ah* everything which has not been expressly prohibited by it is a Permissible *Ma'ruf* (i.e. *Mubah*). It is not at all necessary that an express permission should exist about it or that it should have been expressly left to our choice. Consequently the sphere of permissible *Ma'rufat* is very wide

so much so that except for the things specifically prohibited by the *Shari'ah*, everything is permissible for a Muslim. And this is exactly the sphere where we have been given freedom and where we can legislate according to our own discretion, to suit the requirements of our age and conditions, of course in keeping with the general spirit of the *Shari'ah*.

Munkarat

The *Munkarat* (or the things prohibited in Islam) have been grouped into two categories: *Haram*, i.e., those things which have been prohibited absolutely and *Makruh*, i.e., those things which have been simply disliked. It has been enjoined on Muslims by clear mandatory injunctions to refrain totally from everything that has been declared *Haram*. As for the *Makruhat* the *Shari'ah* signifies its dislike in some way or the other, i.e., either expressly or by implication, giving an indication also as to the degree of such dislike. For example, there are some *Makruhat* bordering on *Haram*, while others bear affinity with the acts which are permissible. Of course, their number is very large ranging between the two extremes of prohibitory and permissible actions. Moreover, in some cases explicit measures have been prescribed by the *Shari'ah* for the prevention of *Makruhat*, while in others such arrangements have been left to the discretion of the society or of the individual.

Some Characteristics of Islamic Ideology

The *Shari'ah*, thus, prescribes directives for the

regulation of our individual as well as collective life. These directives touch such varied subjects as religious rituals, personal character, morals, habits, family relationships, social and economic affairs, administration, rights and duties of citizens, judicial system, laws of war and peace and international relations. In short, it embraces all the various departments of human life. These directives reveal what is good and bad; what is beneficial and useful and what is injurious and harmful ; what are the virtues which we have to cultivate and encourage and what are the evils which we have to suppress and guard against; what is the sphere of our voluntary, untrammelled, personal and social action and what are its limits; and finally, what ways and means we can adopt in establishing such a dynamic order of society and what methods we should avoid. The *Shari'ah* is a complete scheme of life and an all-embracing social order—nothing superfluous, nothing lacking.

Another remarkable feature of the *Shari'ah* is that it is an organic whole. The entire scheme of life propounded by Islam is animated by the same spirit and hence any arbitrary division of the scheme is bound to harm the spirit as well as the structure of the Islamic order. In this respect, it might be compared to the human body which is an organic whole. A leg pulled out of the body cannot be called one-eighth or one-sixth man, because after its separation from the living human body the leg can no more perform its human function. Nor can it be placed in the body of some other animal with any hope of making it human to the extent of that

limb. Likewise, we cannot form a correct opinion about the utility, efficiency and beauty of the hand, the eye or the nose of a human being separately, without judging its place and function within the living body.

The same can be said in regard to the scheme of life envisaged by the *Shari'ah*. Islam signifies the entire scheme of life and not any isolated part or parts thereof. Consequently, neither can it be appropriate to view the different parts of the *Shari'ah* in isolation from one another and without regard to the whole, nor will it be of any use to take any particular part and bracket it with any other "ism". The *Shari'ah* can function smoothly and can demonstrate its efficacy only if the entire system of life is practised in accordance with it and not otherwise.[9]

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9. Selections from *Islamic Law and Constitution*, pp. 46-54. For further readings see : Maududi, *Towards Understanding Islam* and *Foundations of Islamic Faith and Culture*.

Chapter II

THE MORAL SYSTEM OF ISLAM[1]

MORAL sense is inborn in man and through the ages it has served as the common man's standard of moral behaviour, approving certain qualities and disapproving others. While this instinctive faculty may vary from person to person, human conscience[2] has given a more or less uniform verdict in favour of certain moral qualities as being good and declared certain others as bad. On the side of moral virtues, justice, courage, bravery and truthfulness have always elicited praise and history does not record any period worth the name in which falsehood, injustice, dishonesty and breach of trust may have been upheld; fellow-feeling compassion, fidelity, and magnanimity have always been valued while selfishness, cruelty, miserliness and bigotry have never received the approbation of the human society; men have always appreciated perseverance, determination and courage and have never approved of impatience, ficklemindedness, cowardice

1. This is a new and revised translation of a talk given by the author from Radio Pakistan, Lahore, on 6th January, 1948.—*Editor*.

2. This word is used in its wide sense, meaning the moral consciousness of man. It should not be taken in the limited sense in which it is used by writers undertaking an anthropological study of the so-called evolution of morals.—*Editor*.

and imbecility. Dignity, restraint, politeness, and amiability have throughout the ages been counted among virtues, whereas snobbery, misbehaviour and rudeness have never found recognition as good moral qualities. Persons having a sense of responsibility and devotion to duty have always won the highest regard of men; never have people who are incompetent, slothful and lacking in sense of duty been looked upon with approval. Similarly in respect of the standard of good and bad in the collective behaviour of society as a whole, the verdict has always been almost unanimous. Only that society has been looked upon as worthy of honour and respect which possesses the virtues of organization, discipline, mutual affection and fellow-feeling and has established a social order based on justice, freedom and equality of men. As opposed to this, disorganization, indiscipline, anarchy, disunity, injustice and social imbalance have always been considered as manifestations of decay and disintegration in a society. Robbery, murder, larceny, adultery, fraud and graft have always been condemned. Slandering, scandal-mongering and blackmailing have never been considered as wholesome social activities. Contrary to this, service and care of the aged, help of one's kith and kin, regard for neighbours, loyalty to friends, assistance of the weak, the destitute and the orphans, and nursing the sick are qualities which have always been highly valued ever since the dawn of civilization. Virtuous, polite, mild and sincere persons have always been welcomed. Individuals who are upright, honest, sincere, outspoken and dependable, whose needs conform to their words, who are

content with their own rightful possession, who are prompt in the discharge of their obligations to others, who live in peace and let others live in peace and from whom nothing but good can be expected, have always formed the core of any healthy human society.

This shows that human moral standards are in fact universal and have been well-known to mankind throughout the ages.[3] Good and evil are not myths to be hunted out. They are well-known realities and are equally well-understood by all. The sense of good and evil is inherent in the very nature of man. Hence in the terminology of the Qur'an virtue is called "*Ma'roof*" (a well-known thing) and evil is designated as "*Munkar*" (an unknown thing); that is to say virtue is known to be desirable for every one and evil is not known to commend itself in any way. This fact is mentioned by the Qur'an when it says:

فالهمها فجورها و تقواها

> "God has revealed to human nature the consciousness and cognition of good and evil."
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> (*Al-Qur'an*, 91 : 8)

Why Differences?

The question that now arises is: if the basic values of

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3. Some anthropologists and sociologists may not fully subscribe to this view but on deeper reflection it is found that despite superficial differences in mores and morals there is an essential element which is rather universal, particularly in the civilized phases of human existence. And it is this period which the author has in view. This nature and causes of differences are discussed in the following paragraphs.—*Editor*.

good and evil have been so well-known and there has virtually been a universal agreement thereon, then why do varying patterns of moral behaviour exist in this world? Why are there so many and so conflicting moral philosophies? Why do certain moral standards contradict each other? What lies at the root of their differences? What is the unique position of Islam in the context of the prevailing ethical systems? On what grounds can we claim that Islam has a perfect moral system? And what exactly is the distinctive contribution of Islam in the realm of ethics? These questions are important and must be squarely faced; but justice cannot be done to them in the brief span of this talk.[4] To cut a long story short, I shall briefly sum up some of those important points which strike us at the very outset when we undertake a critical examination of the contemporary ethical systems and the conflicting patterns of moral behaviour.

(*a*) The present moral systems fail to integrate various moral virtues and norms by prescribing their specific limits and utility and assisgning to them their proper place. That is why they fail to provide a balanced and coherent plan of social conduct.

(*b*) The real cause of their differences seems to lie in the moral systems offering different standards for good and bad actions and enunicating different means of distinguishing good from evil. Differences also exist in

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4. For a comparatively detailed exposition by the author, see *The Ethical Viewpoint of Islam*, Islamic Publications Ltd., Lahore, 1965.—*Editor*.

respect of the sanction behind the moral law and in regard to the motives which impel a person to follow it.

(*c*) On deeper reflection we find that the grounds for these differences emerge from different peoples' conflicting views and concepts about the universe, the place of man in the universe, and the purpose of man on the earth. Various theories of ethics, philosophy and religion are but a record of the vast divergence of views of mankind on these most vital questions, *viz.* Is there a God and a Sovereign of the universe and if there is, is He One or are there many gods? What are Divine attributes? What is the nature of relationship between God and the human beings? Has He made any arrangements for guiding humanity through the rough and tumble of life or not? Is man answerable to Him or not? If he is, then what are the matters for which he is to be answerable? What is the ultimate aim of man's creation which he should keep in view throughout his life. Answers to these questions will determine the way of life, the ethical philosophy and the pattern of moral behaviour of the individual and the society.

It is difficult for me in this brief talk, to take a stock of the various ethical systems prevalent in the world and indicate what solutions each one of them has proposed to these questions and what has been the impact of these answers on the moral evolution of the society believing in these concepts. Here I can confine myself to the Islamic concept only and this I shall try to propound.[5]

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5. A brief review of the moral systems of the world will be found in *The Ethical Viewpoint of Islam, op. cit.—Editor.*

Islamic Concept of Life and Morality

The viewpoint of Islam, however, is that this universe is the creation of God Who is One. He created it and He alone is its unrivalled Master, Sovereign and Sustainer. The whole universe is functioning under His Divine Command. He is All-Wise, All-Powerful and Omniscient. He is *Subbooh* and *Quddoos* (that is, free from all defects, mistakes, weaknesses and faults and pure in every respect). His God-hood is free from partiality and injustice. Man is His creature, subject and servant and is born to serve and obey Him.

The correct course of life for man is to live in complete obedience to Him. It is not for man to determine the mode of worship and obedience; it is for God to decide this. God, being the Master, has raised from time to time, prophets for the guidance of humanity and has revealed His books through them. It is the duty of man to take the code of his life from these sources of divine guidance. Man is answerable to God for all his actions in life. The time for rendering an account will be in the life-hereafter and not in this world. The short span of worldly life is really an opportunity to prepare for that great test. . In this life all efforts of man should be centered on the object of soliciting the Pleasure and Blessings of God in the Hereafter. During this test every person is responsible for all his beliefs and actions. He, with all his faculties and potentialities, is on trial. There will be an impartial assessment of his conduct in life by a Being Who keeps a complete and correct record

not merely of his movements and actions and their influence on all that is in the world—from the tiniest speck of dust to the loftiest mountains—but also a full record of his innermost ideas and feelings and intentions.

Goal of Moral Striving

This is Islam's fundamental attitude towards life. This concept of the universe and of man's place therein determines the real and ultimate good which should be the object of all the endeavours of mankind and which may be termed briefly as "*seeking the pleasure of God*". This is the standard by which a particular mode of conduct is judged and classified as good or bad. This standard of judgment provides the nucleus around which the whole moral conduct should revolve. Man is not left like a ship without moorings, being tossed about by the blows of wind and tides. This dispensation places a central object before mankind and lays down values and norms for all moral actions. It provides us with a stable and flawless set of values which remains unaltered under all circumstances. Moreover, with making the "pleasure of God" as the object of man's life, a highest and noblest objective is set before humanity and thus unlimited possibilities are opened for man's moral evolution, untainted at any stage by any shadow of narrow selfishness or bigoted race or nation worship.

While providing a normal standard, Islam also furnishes us with means of determining good and evil conduct. It does not base our knowledge of vice and virtue on mere intellect, desire, intuition, or experience derived

through the sense-organs, which constantly undergo shifts and modifications and alterations and do not provide definite, categorical and unchanging standards of morality. It provides us with a definite source, the Divine Revelation, as embodied in the Book of God and the *Sunnah* (way of life) of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). This source prescribes a standard of moral conduct that is permanent and universal and holds good in every age and under all circumstances. The moral code of Islam covers the smallest details of domestic life as well as the broad aspects of national and international behaviour. It guides us at every stage in life. These regulations imply the widest application of moral principles in the affairs of our life and make us free from exclusive dependence on any other source of knowledge, except as an aid to this primary source.

Sanction Behind Morality

This concept of the universe and of man's place therein also furnishes the sanction that must lie at the back of every moral law, *viz.*, the love and fear of God, the sense of accountability on the Day of Judgment and the promise of eternal bliss and reward in the life hereafter. Although Islam wants to cultivate a powerful and strong mass opinion which may induce individuals and groups to abide by the principles of morality laid by it and also aims at the evolution of a political system which would enforce the moral law, as far as possible, through its legislative and executive power, Islam's moral law does not really *depend* on these external pressures alone. It

relies upon the inherent urge for good in every man which is derived from belief in God and the Day of Judgment. Before laying down any moral injunctions Islam seeks to firmly implant in man's heart the conviction that his dealings are with God Who sees him at all times and in all places: that he may hide himself from the whole world but not from Him; that he may deceive everyone but cannot deceive God; that he can flee from the clutches of any one else but not from God's; that while the world can see man's outward life only, God probes into his innermost intentions and desires, that while he may, in his short sojourn on this earth, do whatever he likes but in any event he has to die one day and present himself before the Divine court of justice where no advocacy, favour, recommendation, misrepresentation, deception or fraud will be of any avail and where his future will be decided with complete impartiality and justice. There may or may not be any police, law court or jail in the world to enforce the observance of these moral injunctions and regulations but this belief, firmly rooted in the heart, is the real force at the back of the moral law of Islam which helps in getting it enforced. If popular opinion and the coercive powers of the state exist to give it support so much the better; otherwise, this faith alone can keep a Muslim individual and a Muslim community on the straight path of virtue provided the spark of genuine faith dwells in its heart.

Motives and Incentives

This concept of Islam about man and his place

in the universe also provides those motivating forces which can inspire a person to act in conformity with the moral law. The fact that a man *voluntarily and willingly* accepts God as his own Creator and the obedience of God as the mode of his life and strives to seek His Pleasure in his every action, provides sufficient incentive to enable him to obey the commandments which he believes to be from God. Along with this, the belief in the Day of Judgment and the belief that whosoever obeys Divine Commands is sure to have a good life in the here-after, the eternal life, whatever difficulties and handicaps he may have to face in this transitory phase of life, provides a strong incentive for virtuous life. On the other hand, the belief that whoever violates the Commandments of God in this world, shall have to bear eternal punishment, however superficially nice a life he may have led in this temporary abode; is an effective deterrent against violation of moral law. If this hope and fear are firmly ingrained and deeply rooted in one's heart they will provide a strong motive-force to inspire one to virtuous deeds even on occasions when worldly consequences may appear to be very damaging and harmful, and it will keep one away from evil even on occasions when it looks extremely attractive and profitable.

This clearly indicates that Islam possesses a distinctive criterion of good and evil, its own source of moral law, and its own sanction and motive force, and by them it enforces the well-known and generally recognized moral virtues in all spheres of life after knitting them into a balanced and comprehensive scheme. Thus, it can

be justifiably claimed that Islam possesses a perfect moral system of its own. This system has many distinguishing features and I shall refer to the three most significant ones which, in my opinion, can be termed its special contribution to ethics.

Distinctive Features of Islamic Moral Order

(1) By setting Divine pleasure as the objective of man's life, it has furnished the highest possible standard of morality. This is bound to provide limitless avenues for the moral evolution of humanity. By making Divine revelations the primary source of knowledge it gives permanence and stability to the moral standards which afford reasonable scope for genuine adjustments, adaptations and innovations though not for perversions, wild variations, atomistic relativism or moral fluidity. It provides a sanction to morality in the love and fear of God which will impel man to obey the moral law even without any external pressure. Through belief in God and the Day of Judgment, it furnishes a motive force which enables a person to adopt the moral conduct with earnestness and sincerity, with all the devotion of heart and soul.

(2) It does not, through a false sense of originality and innovation, provide any novel moral virtues nor does it seek to minimise the importance of the well-known moral norms nor give exaggerated importance to some and neglect others without cause. It takes up all the commonly known moral virtues and with a sense of balance and proportion it assigns a suitable place and

function to each one of them in the total scheme of life. It widens the scope of their application to cover every aspect of man's individual and collective life—his domestic associations, his civic conduct, and his activities in the political, economic, legal, educational and social realms. It covers his life from home to society, from the dining-table to the battle-fields and peace conferences, literally from the cradle to the grave. In short, no sphere of life is exempt from the universal and comprehensive application of the moral principles of Islam. It makes morality reign supreme and ensures that the affairs of life, instead of being dominated by selfish desires and petty interests, should be regulated by the norms of morality.

(3) It stipulates for man a system of life which is based on all good and is free from all evil. It invokes the people, not only to practise virtue, but also to establish virtue and eradicate vice, to bid good and to forbid wrong. It wants that the verdict of conscience should prevail and virtue must not be subdued to play second fiddle to evil. Those who respond to this call and gathered together into a community (*Ummah*) and given the name "Muslim". And the singular object underlying the formation of this community (*Ummah*) is that it should make an organized effort to establish and enforce goodness and suppress and eradicate evil.[6] It will be a day of mourning for this community and a bad day for the

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6. The Qur'an lays down this objective in the following verses: "Verily, you are the best people raised unto mankind, you bid virtue, forbid vice and are believers in Allah. (*Al-Qur'an, III* : 110) (*Contd.*)

entire world if the efforts of this very community were at any time directed towards establishing evil and suppressing good.

"If We establish them (the Muslims) in the land (i.e., give them power), they will establish regular prayers and give regular charity, enjoin right and forbid wrong—with God rests the end (of all decisions) of all affairs." (*Al-Qur'an, XXII* : 41)—*Editor.*

Chapter III

ESSENTIAL FEATURES OF ISLAMIC POLITICAL SYSTEM[1]

THE political system of Islam has been based on three principles, *viz.*, *Tawheed* (Unity of God), *Risalat* (Prophethood) and *Khilafat* (Caliphate). It is difficult to appreciate the different aspects of the Islamic polity without fully understanding these three principles. I will, therefore, begin with a brief exposition of them.[2]

Tawheed (Unity) means that one God alone is the Creator, Sustainer and Master of this universe and of all that exists in it—organic or inorganic. The sovereignty of this kingdom vests only in Him. He alone has the right to command or forbid. Worship and obedience are due to Him alone, none else sharing it in any degree or form. Life, in all its multifarious forms, our physical organs and faculties, the apparent control which we have over everything that exists in this universe, and the things themselves—none of them has been created or acquired

1. This is an English rendering of a talk given by the author from Radio Pakistan, Lahore, on 20th January, 1948. The text has been slightly revised.—*Editor*.

2. For a detailed exposition, see Maududi : *Islamic Law and Constitution*, Lahore, 1960, Ch. 4.

by us in our own right. They are the bountiful provisions of God and in bestowing them upon us, no one is associated with Him. Hence, it is neither for us to decide the aim and purpose of our existence or to prescribe the limits in our worldly authority nor is anyone else entitled to make these decisions for us. This right vests only in God Who has created us, endowed us with mental and physical faculties, and provided all material provisions for our use. This principle of the Unity of God altogether negates the concept of the legal and political sovereignty of human beings, individually or collectively. Nothing can claim sovereignty be it a human being, a family, a class or group of people, or even the human race in the world as a whole. God alone is the Sovereign and His Commandments are the Law of Islam.

The medium through which we receive the Law of God is known as "*Risalat*" (Prophethood). We have received two things from this source: (*a*) The Book in which God has expounded His Law; and (*b*) the authoritative interpretation and exemplification of the Book of God by the Prophet, through his word and deed, in his capacity as the representative of God. The broad principles on which the system of human life should be based have been stated in the Book of God. Further, the Prophet of God has, in accordance with the intention of the Divine Book, set up for us a model of the system of life in Islam by practically implementing the law and providing necessary details where required. The combination of these two elements, according to Islamic terminology, is called the '*Shari'ah*'.

Let us now consider "*Khilafat*", which literally means "representation". The real position and place of man, according to Islam, is that of the representative of God on this earth. His vicegerent, that is to say, by virtue of the powers delegated to him by God, he is required to exercise the Divine authority in this world within the limits prescribed by God.

Now take, for example, the case of an estate of yours on which someone else has been appointed to administer on your behalf. You will see that four conditions are invariably fulfilled in this case. First the real ownership of the estate remains vested in you and not in the administrator; secondly, he would administer your property only in accordance with your instructions; thirdly, he would exercise his authority within the limits prescribed by you for him; and fourthly, in the administration of the trust he should execute your will and fulfil your intentions and not his own. These four conditions are so inherent in the very concept of "representation" that they must come to mind as soon as one utters the word "representation". If any representative does not fulfil these four conditions he will naturally be blamed for violating the limits of his representative capacity and for breaking the covenant which was implied in the concept of "representation". This is exactly what Islam means when it lays down that man is *Khalifah* (vicegerent) of God on the earth. Hence, these four conditions are also involved in the concept of *Khilafat*. The state that is established in accordance with this political theory will in fact be a human caliphate under the sovereignty of God and will

have to fulfil the purpose and intent of God by working on God's earth within the limits prescribed by Him and in conformity with His instructions and injunctions.

Democracy in Islam

The above explanation of the term *Khilafat* also makes it abundantly clear that no individual or dynasty or class can be *Khalifah*, but that the authority of caliphate is bestowed on the entire group of people, the community as a whole, which is ready to fulfil the conditions of representation after subscribing to the principles of *Tawheed* (Unity of God) and *Risalat* (Prophethood). Such a society carries the responsibility of the caliphate as a whole and each one of its individuals shares the Divine Caliphate. This is the point where democracy begins in Islam. Every person in an Islamic society enjoys the rights and powers of the caliphate of God and in this respect all individuals are equal. No one takes precedence over another or can deprive anyone else of his rights and powers. The agency for running the affairs of the state will be formed in consonance with the will of these individuals and the authority of the State will only be an accretion of the powers of the individuals delegated to it. Their opinion will be decisive in the formation of the government which will be run with their advice and in accordance with their wishes. Whoever gains their confidence will undertake the duty and obligations of the caliphate on their behalf: and when he loses this confidence he will have to quit and bow before their will. In this respect the political system of Islam is a perfect form

of democracy—as perfect as a democracy can ever be. Of course what distinguishes Islamic democracy from Western democracy is that while the latter is based on the concept of popular sovereignty the former rests on the principle of popular *Khilafat.* In Western Secular democracy, the people are sovereign, in Islam sovereignty vests in God and the people are His caliphs or representatives. In the former the people make their own laws (*Shari'ah*) in the latter they have to follow and obey the laws (*Shari'ah*) given by God through His Prophet. In one the government undertakes to fulfil the will of the people; in the other the government and the people who form it have one and all to fulfil the purpose of God. In brief, Western democracy is a kind of absolute authority which exercises its powers in a free and uncontrolled manner whereas the Islamic democracy is subservient to the Divine Law and exercises its authority in conformity with the injunctions of God and within the limits prescribed by Him.

Purpose of the Islamic State

I shall now place before you a brief outline of the type of state which is built on the foundation of *Tawheed* (the Unity of God), "*Risalat*" (the Prophethood of Muhammad) and "*Khilafat*" (the Caliphate).[3]

The Holy Qur'an clearly states that the aim and purpose of this state is the establishment, maintenance and

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3. For a detailed study of all these and other relevant points, see *Islamic Law and Constitution*, Ch. 4, Sec. IV and V ; Ch. 5, Sec. III, V and VI ; Ch. 6, Sec. IV.—*Editor*.

development of those virtues with which the Creator of this universe wishes the human life to be adorned and the prevention and eradication of those evils the presence of which in human life is utterly abhorrent to God. The state in Islam is not intended for political administration only nor for the fulfilment through it of the collective will of any particular set of people; rather, Islam places a high ideal before the state for the achievement of which it must use all the means at its disposal. And this purpose is that the qualities of purity, beauty, goodness, virtue, success and prosperity which God wants to flourish in the life of His people should be engendered and evolved and that all kinds of exploitation, injustice and disorders which, in the view of God, are ruinous for the world and detrimental to the life of His creatures are suppressed and prevented. Simultaneously with placing before us this high ideal Islam gives us a clear outline of its moral system clearly stating the desired virtues and the undesirable evils. Keeping this outline in view the Islamic state can plan its welfare programme in every age and in any environment.

The persistent demand made by Islam is that the principles of morality must be observed at all cost and in all walks of life. Hence, it lays down an unalterable policy for the state to base its politics on justice, truth, and honesty. It is not prepared, under any circumstances whatsoever, to tolerate fraud, falsehood and injustice for the sake of any political, administrative or national expediency. Whether it be the mutual relations of the rulers and the ruled within the state, or the relations of the state with other states, precedence must always be

given to truth, honesty, and justice over material considerations. It imposes similar obligations on the state as on the individual, *viz.*, to fulfil all contracts and obligations, to have uniform measures and standards for dealings; to remember duties along with the rights and not to forget the rights of others when expecting them to fulfil their obligations ; to use power and authority for the establishment of justice and not for the perpetration of injustice; to look upon duty as a sacred obligation and to fulfil it scrupulously; and to regard power as a trust from God and use it with the belief that one has to render an account of one's actions to Him in the Hereafter.

Fundamental Rights

Although an Islamic state may be set up in any portion of the earth, Islam does not seek to restrict human rights or privileges to the geographical limits of its own state. Islam has laid down some universal fundamental rights[1] for humanity as a whole, which are to be observed and respected under all circumstances whether such a person is resident within the territory of the Islamic state or outside it, whether he is at peace with the state or at war. Human blood is sacred in any case and cannot be spilled without justification. It is not permissible to oppress women, children, old people, sick persons or the wounded. Woman's honour and chastity are worthy of respect under all circumstances. The hungry person must be fed, the naked clothed, and the wounded or diseased treated medically irrespective of whether they

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4. For a comprehensive discussion on this point, see Maududi, *Fundamental Rights of Man*. Also *Islamic Law and Constitution*, Ch. 6, Sec. VII and Ch. 7, Sec. IX and X.—*Editor*.

belong to the Islamic community or not or even if they are from amongst its enemies. These, and a few other provisions have been laid down by Islam as fundamental rights for every man by virtue of his status as a human being to be enjoyed under the constitution of an Islamic state. Even the rights of citizenship in Islam are not confined to persons born within the limits of its state but are granted to every Muslim irrespective of his place of birth. A Muslim *ipso facto* becomes the citizen of an Islamic state as soon as he sets his foot on its territory with the intent to live therein and thus enjoys equal rights of citizenship along with those who acquire its citizenship by birthright. Citizenship has therefore to be common among all the Islamic states that may exist in the world and a Muslim will not need any passport for entry in or exit from any of them. And every Muslim is to be regarded as eligible and fit for all positions of the highest responsibility in an Islamic state with any distinctions of race, colour or class.[5]

Islam has also laid down certain rights for the non-Muslims who may be living within the boundaries of an Islamic state and these rights must necessarily form part of the Islamic Constitution.[6] According to the Islamic terminology such non-Muslims are called *Dhimmees* (the covenanted), implying that the Islamic state has entered into a covenant with them and guaranteed their protec-

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5. Some of the points referred to here are to materialise when the Islamic state has attained its final form. As far as the transitory phase is concerned, efforts will be made to come into as close conformity with them as possible. The Islamic state is to be established gradually and will not come into existence like a bolt from the blue.—*Editor.*

6. For details, see *Islamic Law and Constitution*, Ch. 8.—*Editor.*

tion. The life, property and honour of a *Dhimmee* (non-Muslim citizen) is to be respected and protected exactly like that of a Muslim citizen. There is no difference at all between a Muslim and a non-Muslim citizen in respect of the civil or criminal law. The Islamic state shall not interfere with the personal law of the non-Muslims. They will have full freedom of conscience and belief and will be at liberty to perform their religious rites and ceremonies in the ways they like. Not only can they propagate their religion but they are entitled even to criticise Islam within the limits laid down by law and decency. The rights given in this respect are not limited, but the civil law of the country is to be fully respected and all criticism will have to be made within its framework which would be applicable to all citizens of the state. These, as well as many other rights, have been granted to the *Dhimmees* in Islam. These rights are of an irrevocable nature. The non-Muslims cannot be deprived of them unless they renounce the covenant which grants them citizenship. Whatever be the extent of oppression which a non-Muslim state may perpetrate on its Muslim citizens it is not permissible for an Islamic state to retaliate on its non-Muslim subjects in the slightest degree so much so that even if all the Muslims outside the boundaries of an Islamic state are massacred, the state cannot unjustly shed the blood of a single non-Muslim citizen living within its boundaries.

Executive and Legislature

The responsibility for the administration of the Government, in an Islamic state, is entrusted to an *Amir*

(leader or chief) who may be likened to the President or the Prime Minister in a modern democratic state. All the adult men and women who believe in the fundamentals of the constitution will be entitled to vote for election of the chief.[7]

The basic qualifications for the election of an *Amir* are that he should command the confidence of the largest number of people in respect of his knowledge and grasp over the spirit of Islam; he should possess the Islamic attributes of fear of God and be endowed with qualities of statesmanship. In short, he should have virtue and capacity both. A *Shura* (advisory council) is also to be elected by the people for assisting and guiding the *Amir* in the administration of the state. It will be incumbent on the *Amir* to administer the country with the advice of this *Shura*. The *Amir* can retain office only so long as he enjoys the confidence of the people and will have to vacate his office when he loses this confidence. But as long as he retains such confidence he will have the authority to govern and exercise the powers of the Government of course in consultation with the *Shura* (the advisory council) and within the limits set by the *Shari'ah*. Every citizen will have the right to criticise the *Amir* and his Government and all the reasonable means for the ventilation of the public opinion will be available.

Legislation in an Islamic state will be restricted within the limits prescribed by the law of the *Shari'ah*. The injunctions of God and His Prophet are to be

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7. See ***Islamic Law and Constitution***, Ch. 6, Sec. IV, V and VI.

accepted and obeyed and no legislative body can make any alterations or modifications in them or make any law repugnant to them. As for the commandments which are liable to two or more interpretations the duty of ascertaining the real intent of the *Shari'ah*, in such cases, will devolve on people possessing a specialized knowledge of the law of *Shari'ah*. Hence such affairs will have to be referred to a sub-committee of the advisory council comprising of men learned in Islamic Law. A vast field will still be available for legislation on questions not covered by any specific injunctions of the *Shari'ah* and the advisory council or legislature will be free to legislate in regard to these matters.

In Islam the judiciary is not placed under the control of the executive. It derives its authority directly from the *Shari'ah* and is answerable to God. The Judges no doubt can be appointed by the Government but once a judge has occupied the bench he will have to administer justice among the people according to the law of God in an impartial manner, and the organs and functionaries of the Government will not be outside his legal jurisdiction so much so that even the highest executive authority of the Government is liable to be called upon to appear in a court of law as a plaintiff or defendant like any other citizen of the state. Rulers and the ruled are subject to the same law and there can be no discrimination on the basis of position, power or privilege. Islam stands for equality and scrupulously sticks to this principle in social, economic and political realms alike.

Chapter IV

ISLAMIC SOCIAL ORDER[1]

THE foundations of the social system of Islam rest on the belief that all human beings are equal and constitute one single fraternity.

Equality of Mankind

God created a human pair to herald beginning of the life of mankind on the earth and all persons inhabiting this world today have sprung from this pair. For some time in the initial stages the progeny of this pair remained a single group. It had one religion and spoke the same language. There were little or no differences among them. But as their numbers gradually increased, they spread all over the earth and as a natural result of their diversification and growth were divided into various tribes, and nationalities. Their languages became different; their modes of dress varied; and their manners of living also became distinct from one another. The climate and environment of various places altered their

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1. This talk was given from Radio Pakistan, Lahore on 10th February, 1948. Those who are interested to pursue this subject are requested to study *Purdah* (Urdu), Lahore, *Huqquq az-Zaujain* (Urdu), Lahore and *Studies in the Family Laws of Islam*; Ed. by Khurshid Ahmad, Karachi, 1961.—*Editor*.

colour and physical features. All these differences are natural variations. They do exist in the world of reality. Hence, Islam recognizes them as matters of fact. It does not seek to wipe them out or to ignore them but affirms that their advantage consists in affording the only possible means of distinguishing one from the other. But the prejudices which have arisen among mankind out of these differences in the shape of groupings and organizations based on race, colour, language, nationality, etc. are disapproved by Islam. Islam regards all distinctions of birth, of high and low among men, of upper and lower classes, of natives of the soil and aliens as the manifestation of sheer ignorance. It declares that all men in the world that they have sprung from the same parents and therefore are brothers and equal in their status as human beings.

After propounding this concept of equality and brotherhood of mankind, Islam adds that if there can be any real difference between man and man it cannot be one of race, colour, country or language, but of ideas, beliefs and principles. Two children of the same mother, though they may be equal from the point of view of common ancestry, will have to go their different ways in life if their beliefs and moral conduct differ from one another. On the contrary two persons, one being in the East and the other in the West, even though geographically and outwardly separated from one another by vast distances, will tread the same path in life if they have identity of ideas and moral behaviour. On the basis of this fundamental tenet, Islam seeks to build a principled

and ideological society as against the racial, national and parochial societies existing in the world. The basis of co-operative effort among men in such a society is not one's birth but a creed and a moral principle. Anyone, if he believes in God as his Master and Lord—and accepts the guidance of the prophets as the law of his life, can join this community, whether he is a resident of America or Africa; whether he belongs to the Semitic race or the Aryan; whether he is black in colour or white-skinned; whether he speaks a European language or Arabic. All those who join this community will have the same rights and social status. They will not be subjected to any racial, national, or class distinctions of any kind. No one will be regarded as high or low. There will be no untouchability among them; none could be polluted by the touch of anyone's hand. There will be no handicaps for them in the matter of marital relations, eating and drinking, and social contacts. None will be looked down as lowly or mean by reason of his birth or profession. Nobody will claim any distinctive rights by virtue of his caste, community or ancestry. Man's merit will not depend on his family connections or riches, but only on whether he is better than others in moral conduct or excels others in piety and righteousness.

Such a social order, outstepping the geographical boundaries and limits of race, colour and language as it does, can spread itself in all parts of the world and on its foundations can be raised the edifice of the universal brotherhood of men. In societies based on race or nationality, only those people can join who belong to a

particular race or country and the door is closed in the face of all those who do not belong to them. But in this ideological society anyone who accepts the creed and its moral standard can become its member, possessing equal rights with everyone else. As for those who do not accept this creed, the community, while it cannot receive them within its fold, is prepared to have relations of tolerance and brotherhood with them and give them all the basic human rights. It is evident that if two children of the same mother differ in their thoughts, their ways of life will necessarily be different in any case; but this does not, however, imply that they cease to be brothers. Exactly in the same manner, if two groups of human beings or two groups of the people living in the same country, differ in their fundamental beliefs and principles and ideology, their social order will also certainly differ from one another, although they will continue to share the common ties of humanity. Hence, the Islamic society offers to non-Muslim societies and groups the maximum social and cultural rights that can possibly be accorded on the basis of common bonds of humanity.

After appreciating these foundations of Islamic social order, we would like to cast a glance over the principles and patterns of social relationship which have been fostered by Islam.

The Institution of Family

The foremost and fundamental institution of human society is the unit of family. A family is established by the coming together of a man and a woman, and their

contact brings into existence a new generation. It then produces ties of kinship and community, which gradually develop into a large society. The family is the institution through which a generation prepares the succeeding generation for the service of human civilization and for the discharge of its social obligations with devotion, sincerity and enthusiasm. This institution does not merely recruit cadets for the maintenance and development of human culture but its guardians. They earnestly desire that those who have to replace them in future should be better than themselves. In this respect the family can be truly called the fountain-head of the progress, development, prosperity and strength of human civilization on the earth. Hence, among the social problems Islam devotes much attention to those relating to the family and strives to establish this important social unit on the healthiest and strongest foundations. According to Islam the correct form of relationship between man and woman is marriage, that is, the one in which full social responsibilities are undertaken by them and which results in the emergence of a family. Free sex-licence and irresponsible behaviour are not condoned by Islam as innocent pastimes or ordinary transgressions. Rather, they are acts which strike at the very roots of human society. Hence, Islam holds every form of extra-matrimonial sex-relationship as sinful, forbidden (*haram*) and punishable under the criminal law of Islam. It prescribes severe punishments for the offence so that such unsocial behaviour may not become common. At the same time it aims at purifying and purging the society of

all activities which encourage such irresponsible actions or provide opportunities for them. Regulations of Purdah, ban on free mixing of men and women, restrictions on filthy music and pictures, and discouragement of the spread and propagation of obscenities and aberrations, are all intended to guard against this. Their sole object is to protect and strengthen the institution of the family. Islam does not merely regard the desirable form of social contact as just permissible but holds and affirms it as good and virtuous act, indeed, an act of worship. It does not simply look upon celibacy of an adult person with disfavour, but it calls upon every young man to take in his turn upon himself the social responsibilities of married life just as his parents did so in their time. Islam does not merely regard asceticism and perpetual celibacy as no virtue at all but as aberrations and departures from the true nature of man and acts of revolt against the Divine scheme of things. It also strongly disapproves those rites, ceremonies or restrictions which tend to make marriage a difficult and tedious affair. The intention of Islam is that marriage may become easy and fornication the most difficult thing in society, and not *vice versa* as it is in most of the societies today. Hence, after debarring a few specified relatives from entering into matrimony with one another, it has legalised marital relations with all other near and distant kith and kin. It has removed all distinctions of caste and community and permitted matrimony of any Muslim with any other Muslim. It has enjoined that the amounts of *mehr* (dower) should be fixed at a low and easy figure, the burden of which can

be easily borne by the husband and has dispensed with the necessity of priests and offices of compulsory registration. In an Islamic society marriage is such a plain and simple ceremony as can be performed anywhere before two witnesses, though it is essential that the proceedings should not be kept secret. The idea is that the society should know that the couple is now going to live a matrimonial life.

Within the family itself Islam has assigned to man a position of authority so that he may maintain order and discipline as the chief of the household. Islam expects the wife to obey and look after the comforts and well-being of her husband and expects the children to behave accordingly to their parents. Islam does not favour a loose and disjointed family system which is devoid of any authority, control and discipline and in which someone is not pointedly responsible for the proper conduct and behaviour of its members. Discipline can only be maintained through a central authority and in the view of Islam the position of father in the family is such that it makes him the fittest person to take over this responsibility. But this does not mean that man has been made a tyrant and oppressor in the household and woman has been handed over to him as a helpless chattel. According to Islam the real spirit of marital life is love, understanding and mutual respect. If woman has been asked to obey the husband the latter has been called upon to exercise his privileges towards the welfare of the family and treat the wife with love, affection and sweetness. Islam makes the marital bond strong but not unbreakable.

It aims at keeping the bond intact only so long as it is founded on the sweetness of love or at least the possibility of lasting companionship exists. When this possibility dies out, it gives man the right of divorce and woman the right of separation, and under certain conditions where married life has become a source of misery or nuisance, gives the Islamic courts of justice the authority to annul the marriage.

Relatives and Neighbours

Beyond the limited circle of family the next social sphere which is sufficiently wide is that of kinship and blood relationship. Those who are one's kith and kin through relationship with common parents or common brothers and sisters or relations through in-laws—Islam wants them all to be mutually affectionate, co-operative and helpful. In many places in the Qur'an good treatment of the *Zawil Qurba* (near relations) is enjoined. In the traditions of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) good treatment of one's relations (*silah rehmi*) has been emphasised and counted among the highest virtues. A person who cold-shoulders his relations or treats them in an indifferent manner is looked down by Islam with great disfavour. But this does not mean that it is an Islamic virtue to be partial or unduly lenient towards one's relations. Such support or partiality towards one's relations as may result in injustice, is repugnant to Islam which, condemns it as an act of *Jahiliyyah* (ignorance). Similarly it is utterly un-Islamic for a government official

or public trustee to support his relations at public expense or to be partial to his kith and kin in his official decisions; this would actually be a sinful act. Fair treatment of one's relations as enjoined by Islam, should be at one's own expense and within the limits of justice and fairplay.

Next to relations come the neighbours. The Qur'an has divided them into three categores (1) a neighbour who is also a relation (2) an alien neighbour (3) a casual or temporary neighbour with whom one had occasion to live or travel for some time. All of them are deserving of fellow-feeling, affection, courtesy and fair treatment. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) has said that the rights of the neighbour were so overwhelmingly emphasised to him by the angel Gabriel that he apprehended that neighbours may be made to partake of one's inheritance. In another tradition the Prophet (peace be upon him) said that a man whose neighbour is not safe from his misdeeds is not a believer in Islam. Again, he (peace be upon him) says that a person who enjoys a full meal while his neighbour is starving really possesses no faith in Islam. The Prophet was once informed of a woman who used to offer prayers regularly and keep fasts very often and give alms frequently, but her neighbours were sick of her abusive tongue. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said that such a woman deserved only the fire of hell. He was also told of another woman who did not possess these virtues but did not trouble her neighbours either, and the Prophet (peace be upon him) said that she might be rewarded with paradise. The Prophet (peace be upon him) has laid so much emphasis on this virtue that he has advised that

whenever a Muslim brings fruits for his children he should either send some to his neighbours as gift or at least not throw the peelings outside the door so that the neighbours may not have a feeling of deprivation.[2] On one occasion the Prophet (peace be upon him) said that a man is really good if his neighbours regard him as such and he is bad if they consider him so. In brief, Islam requires all neighbours to be loving and co-operative with one another and share one another's sorrows and happiness. It enjoins that they should establish social relations in which one could depend upon the other and regard his life, honour and property safe among his neighbours. A society in which two persons, separated only by a wall, remain unacquainted with one another for years together and those living in the same area of a town have no interest or confidence in one another can never be called Islamic.

Next to these is the wider circle of relationship which covers the entire society. The broad principles on which

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2. It is a portion of an elaborate Hadith which has been narrated by Tibrani that one of the companions of the Prophet (peace be upon him) enquired : ' O, Prophet of Allah, what is the right of a neighbour in respect of his neighbours ?" The Prophet (peace be upon him) replied, "If he asks for loan, you should give him loan ; if he wants your help, you should help him ; if he be sick, you should go to see him ; if he be needy you should try to fulfil his need ; if he gets good news, you should congratulate him ; if any calamity befalls him, it is your duty to console him ; if he dies, you should attend his funeral ; you should not raise your walls to such height that it obstructs the ventilation of your neighbour's house, even if he be willing ; do not tease your neighbour by the smell of your delicious food, rather send a portion of it to him ; if you bring fruits in your house then send some to your neighbour, otherwise keep it unobserved by your neighbours, and you should also be careful that your children may not take the same out, else the children of your neighbours may feel disappointed."

Islam seeks to regulate the general gamut of our social life are the following:

(1) To co-operate in acts of virtue and piety and not to co-operate in acts of sin and injustice.[3]

(2) "One's friendship and enmity should be for the pleasure of God only; whatever you (Muslims) give should be given because God likes it to be given, and whatever you (Muslims) withhold should be withheld because God does not like its gift" (saying of the Holy Prophet).[4]

(3) "You (the Muslims) are the best community ever raised unto mankind, your duty is to command people to do good and prevent them from committing evil."[5]

(4) "Do not think evil of each other nor probe into each other's affairs nor excite one against the other. Keep yourself away from mutual hatred and jealousy. Do not unnecessarily oppose each other. Always remain the slaves and subjects of Allah and live like brothers among yourself."[6]

(5) "Do not help a tyrant knowing him to be such."[7]

(6) "To support the community when it is in the wrong is like falling into a well while catching the tail of your camel which was about to fall into it."[8]

(7) "Choose for others what you choose for yourself."[9]

These are some of the social values which Islam affirms and establishes and which it wants to see enshrined in the human society.

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3. The Qur'an. 4. Hadith. 5. The Qur'an.
6. Hadith. 7. Hadith. 8. Hadith.
9. Hadith.

Chapter V

ECONOMIC PRINCIPLES OF ISLAM[1]

ISLAM has laid down some principles and prescribed certain limits for the economic activity of man so that the entire pattern of production, exchange and distribution of wealth may conform to the Islamic standard of justice and equity. Islam does not concern itself with time-bound methods and techniques of economic production or with the details of the organizational pattern and mechanisms. Such methods are specific for every age and are evolved in accordance with the needs and requirements of the community and exigencies of the economic situation. What Islam aims at is that whatever be the form or mechanism of economic activity, the principles prescribed by it should find a permanent and paramount place in such activities under all circumstances and in all ages.

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1. This is a new and revised translation of a talk given by the author from Radio Pakistan on 2nd March, 1948.

Those who want to study the author's exposition of the Islamic Economic System are requested to read the following :

"Economic Teachings of the Qur'an", *A History of Muslim Philosophy*, Ed. by M. M. Sharif, Otto Harranwitz, Wilsbaden, 1963, Vol. I, Book 2, Ch. IX, pp. 178—190 ; *Islam and Modern Ideologies* (Urdu), Lahore; *The Problem of Interest* (Urdu), Lahore; and *Islam and Social Justice* (Urdu), Lahore.—*Editor*.

According to the Islamic point of view, God has created for mankind the earth and all that it contains. It is, therefore, the birth-right of every human being to try and secure his share out of the world. All men enjoy this right equally and none can be deprived of it; nor should one man get precedence over another. From the standpoint of Islam, there can be no bar on any individual, race, or class, for taking to certain means of livelihood or adopting certain professions. All are entitled to equal opportunities in the economic realm. Similarly no distinction is valid in Islam which would result in creating a monopoly of a particular means of livelihood for a particular person, class, race, or group of people. It is the right of all men to strive and get their share of the means of sustenance provided by God on the earth. Islam ensures that this effort should be made in the context of equal opportunities and fair chances for all.

Right of Property

Resources which are provided by nature free of cost and which can be used directly by man may be utilized freely and every one is entitled to benefit from them to the extent of his needs. Water flowing in the rivers and springs, wood in the forest trees, fruits of wild plants, wild grass and fodder, air, animals of the jungle, minerals under the surface of the earth and similar other resources cannot be monopolised by anyone nor can a restriction of any sort be imposed on their free use by God's creatures to fulfil their own needs. Of course, people who want to use any one of these things for commercial purposes can

be required to pay taxes to the state. Or if there is a misuse of the resources, the Government may step in and set the things right. But there is no bar on the individuals to avail of God's earth as long as they do not interfere with the rights of others or of the state.

It is not fair that things created by God for the benefit of mankind should be taken possession of by anyone and kept in an idle and unused state. One should either himself benefit from them or make them available to others for use. On the basis of this principle Islam holds that no one can keep his land in an uncultivated condition for more than three years. If he does not himself use it for cultivation or construction of buildings or in any other manner, such land shall be treated as 'vacated' after a period of 3 years, and anyone else who brings it into use shall not be liable to be proceeded against in law, nor shall the Government have any authority to hand it over to someone else (including the previous owner).[2]

Anyone who takes possession of the natural resources directly and renders it of value acquires a rightful title

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2. Imam Abu Yusuf (may peace of Allah be on him) relates this Hadith on the authority of Tawoos in his book *Kitab al-Khiraj*:

"The deserted plot of land (having no owner) belongs to God, His Prophet and then to yourself. A deserted plot of land will be the property of one who brings it in use and anyone who does not make use of it for three consecutive years will have no right on it after the expiry of the said period."

Again it has been narrated by Abu Yusuf on the authority of Hazrat Salem Ibn Abdullah Zahri, that once Hazrat 'Umar during his caliphate proclaimed from the pulpit of the mosque :

"A deserted plot of land will be the property of anyone who brings it in use and anyone who does not make use of it for three years will have no right on it whatsoever."

over it. For instance, if somebody takes possession of an uncultivated piece of land, on which nobody has a prior right of ownership, and makes a productive use of it he cannot be arbitrarily dispossessed of that piece of land.[3] This is how all rights of ownership originated in the world. When man appeared for the first time in the world and population grew, everything was available to everyone, and whoever took possession of any thing and made it useful in any manner became its owner; that is to say, he acquired the right of using it specially for his own purpose and obtaining compensation from others if they wanted to use it. This is the natural basis of all the economic activities of mankind and must not be tampered with. This right of ownership which one may acquire by permissible legal means are to be honoured under all circumstances. It can be inquired into whether a particular ownership is legally valid as ownership which are legally invalid should undoubtedly be terminated; but no state or legislature has a right to arbitrarily divest the people of the right to ownership or to take over or interfere with properties legally valid, except against any right justifiable. Islam cannot approve of an economic policy which destroys the rights conferred by the *Shari'ah*, however attractive its name may be and whatever welfare pretensions it may make. Social justice and collective good are very

3. Discussing the law derived from the above-mentioned Ahadis Imam Abu Yusuf states :

"According to our view (i.e. the Hanafi view) the land which was not previously owned by anyone if brought in use by someone, he has a rightful proprietary claim over it."

dear to Islam, but not at the cost of rights given by the *Shari'ah*. It is as unjust to reduce or remove the restrictions placed by the *Shari'ah* on the rights of individual ownership for the sake of collective good of the community as it is to add such restrictions and limitations which do not fit into the scheme of the Islamic law. It is one of the duties of an Islamic state to protect the legal (*Shar'i*) rights of the individual and to ensure that they fulfil their obligations to the community as enjoined by law. That is how Islam strikes a balance between individualism and collectivism.

The Problem of Equality

If we observe the phenomena of nature and God's blessings unto mankind we find that He has not observed equality in the distribution of His bounties and favours but in His infinite wisdom has accorded precedence to some individuals over others. Beauty of form, pleasantness of voice, excellence of physique and mental talents, etc. etc., have not been granted to men in equal degree. The same is the case with the material means of life. Human nature has been so ordained that divergence, variety and inequality among men in their modes and standards of living seems to be the most natural thing. Variety is the spice of life and the driving spirit behind human effort and excellence. Consequently all those schemes and ideologies which want to force upon mankind any artificial economic equality are mistaken, unrealistic and impossible of achievement. The equality in which Islam believes is equality in respect of the opportu-

nities of struggle for securing a livelihood and for climbing the uppermost rung of the ladder of well-being and prosperity. Islam desires that no legal, functional or traditional handicaps should exist in society to prevent an individual from struggling for a living according to his capacity and talent nor should any social distinctions subsist with the object of safeguarding the privileges of a particular class, race, and dynasty or group of people. All those schemes and ideologies which serve the vested interests or which want to perpetrate the hold of a certain group are repugnant to Islam and can have no place in its scheme of things. Such movements seek to establish, through force and resort to artificial means, an unnatural inequality in place of the natural limited inequality which feeds the springs of incentive to effort in a society. Hence, Islam aims at wiping them out and putting the economic system on the natural footing so that the opportunities of struggle may remain open to all. At the same time Islam does not agree with those who desire to enforce complete equality in respect of the means of production and the fruits of economic endeavour, as they aim at replacing, limited natural inequalities by an artificial equality. Only that system can be the nearest to human nature in which everyone joins the economic struggle at the stage and in the circumstances in which God has created him. He who has inherited an aeroplane should struggle equipped with it; while he who has only a pair of legs should stand on his feet and try to move ahead. The laws of society should neither be such as would establish a permanent monopoly of the aeroplane-owner over his

aeroplane and make it impossible for the bare-footed to acquire an aeroplane nor such that the race for everyone of them should compulsorily begin from one point and under the same conditions and they should all perforce be tied to each other right till the end of the race. Contrary to this, the economic laws should be such as to make it possible for the bare-footed, who started his race under adverse conditions, to secure and possess an aeroplane if he can do so by dint of his struggle and ability, and for him who inherited the aeroplane, to be left behind in the race and be without it if that is due to his own inability or incapacity or inefficiency. Effort should be paid and inactivity penalised.

Social Justice

Islam does not wish that this economic race takes place in an atmosphere of cold impartiality, moral neutrality and social apathy. It deems it desirable that the participants in the economic race should be considerate and sympathetic to one another. On the one hand, Islam, through its moral injunctions, aims at creating a feeling of mutual love and affection among the people, under which they may help their weak and weary brethren and at the same time create a permanent institution in the society to guarantee help and assistance to those who are lacking in the necessary means of subsistence. People who are unable to take part in the economic race should secure their share from this social institution. And those who need some assistance to commence their struggle in the economic field may also receive it in full measure

from this institution. To this end Islam has commanded that *Zakat* should be levied at the rate of 2½% per annum on the total accumulated wealth of the country as well as on the invested capital; 5% to 10% should be collected on the agricultural produce of all *'ushr*, 20% on certain mineral products. The annual *Zakat* should also be levied at a specified rate, on the herds of cattle owned by anyone beyond a certain minimum number. The amount of *Zakat* thus collected is to be spent on giving assistance to the poor, the orphans and the indigent. This provides a means of social insurance in the presence of which no one in an Islamic society can ever remain without being well-provided with the necessities of life. No worker can ever be forced through fear of starvation to accept any conditions of employment which may be dictated to him by the industrialist or the landlord to his disadvantage. And nobody's physical health can ever be allowed to fall below the minimum standard of fitness for lack of proper medical care and hospitalization.

As regards the position of the individual *vis-a-vis* the community, Islam aims at striking such a balance between them as would promote the individual liberty of a person and at the same time ensure that such freedom is not detrimental to the interests of the community as a whole, but is positively conducive to its growth and tranquillity. Islam does not approve of a political or economic organization which aims at merging the identity of the individual into that of the community and depriving him of the freedom essential for a proper development of his personality and talent. The inevitable consequence of

nationalising *all* the means of production in a country is the annihilation of the individual by the community, and in these circumstances the existence and development of his individuality becomes extremely difficult, if not impossible. Just as political and social freedom is essential for the individual, economic freedom is likewise indispensable for civilized moral existence. Unless we desire to completely eliminate the individuality of man our social life should have enough margin for an individual to be free to earn his living to maintain the freedom of his conscience, and to be able to develop his moral and intellectual faculties according to his own inclinations and aptitudes. Living on a dole or virtual dole at the hands of others cannot be very satisfying, even though it is plentiful because the retardation of mental, moral and spiritual development to which it ultimately leads can never be compensated or counter-balanced by mere physical welfare and prosperity which too are doubtful.

Just as Islam does not like such a system it also does not favour a social system which gives unbridled economic and social freedom to individuals and gives them a blank cheque to secure their individual interest and achieve their objective even at the cost of the welfare of the community as a whole or by exploiting and misappropriating the wealth of others. Between these two extremes Islam has adopted the middle course according to which the individual is first called upon, in the interest of the community, to accept certain restrictions, and is then left free to regulate his own affairs. He has freedom of enterprise and competition within a framework which guarantees

the good of both the individual and the society. It is not possible to explain all these obligations and restrictions in detail and I shall, therefore, content myself with presenting a bare outline of them.

Obligations and Restrictions

Take the case of earning a livelihood first. The meticulous care with which Islam has distinguished between right and wrong in respect of the means of earning wealth is not to be found in any other legal and social system existing in the world. It condemns as illegal all those means of livelihood which injure, morally or materially, the interests of another individual or of the society as a whole. Islamic law categorically rejects as illegal the manufacture and sale of liquor and other intoxicants; adultery; professional dancing and obscenity; gambling; speculation; races and lotteries; transactions of speculative, imaginary, fraudulent or controversial nature; business transactions in which the gain of one party is absolutely guaranteed and assured while that of the other party is left uncertain and doubtful; price manipulation by withholding the sale of necessities of life; and many other similar transactions which are detrimental to the interests of the community. If we examine this aspect of the economic laws of Islam we will find a long list of practices declared illegal most of which can and are making people millionaires in the capitalistic system. Islam forbids all these unfair means and allows freedom of earning wealth only by those means through which a person renders some real and useful service to the com-

munity and thereby entitles himself to a fair and just compensation for it.

Islam accepts the rights of ownership of an individual over the wealth earned by him by legitimate means but even these rights are not unqualified. A man can spend his legitimate wealth, only in legitimate avenues and by legitimate means. Islam has imposed restrictions on expenditure so that while one can lead a decent life, one cannot waste one's riches on luxurious pursuits. A person cannot transgress the prescribed limits of exhibiting his status and affluence and behave as a super-being *vis-a-vis* other persons. Certain forms of illegal and wasteful expenditure have been clearly and unequivocally prohibited while some others, though not expressly banned, may be prohibited at the discretion of the Islamic state.

One is permitted to accumulate wealth that is left over after meeting his legitimate and reasonable requirements and these savings can also be used in producing more wealth but there are some restrictions on both of these activities. In the event of accumulation of wealth he will, of course, have to pay *Zakat* at the rate of 2½% per annum on the accumulation exceeding the specified minimum. If he desires to invest it in business he can only do so in what is declared as legitimate business. It is permissible for a man to undertake the legitimate business himself or to make his capital available to others on profit-loss sharing basis. It is not at all objectionable in Islam if, working within these limits, a man becomes even a millionaire; rather this will constitute a Divine favour.

But in the interests of the community as a whole Islam imposes two conditions on the individual; first, that he should pay *Zakat* on his commercial goods and *'Ushr* (1/10) of the value of agricultural produce; secondly, that he should deal fairly and honestly with those whom he brings into his partnership in trade, industry, or agriculture, with those whom he takes in his employment and with the state and the community at large. If one does not do justice to others, particularly his employees, of his own accord, the Islamic state will compel him to do so.

Then again, even wealth that is accumulated within these legal limits is not allowed by Islam to be concentrated at a point or place for a long time. By means of its law of inheritance Islam spreads it over a large number of persons from generation to generation. In this respect the spirit of Islamic law is different from that of other laws prevailing in the contemporary world. Most of the inheritance laws attempt to keep the wealth once accumulated by a person concentrated in the hands of the beneficiary from generation to generation. As against this, Islam has made a law under which the wealth accumulated by a person in his lifetime is distributed among all of his near relatives soon after his death. If there are no near relatives then distant relatives are to benefit from it in the proportions laid down by the law for each one of them. And if no distant relative is forthcoming then the entire Muslim society is entitled to its inheritance. Under this law the creation or continuance of any big family of capitalists or landlords becomes impossible. If in spite of all the restrictions and conditions stated above, any

shred of evil subsists along such accumulation of wealth in one's lifetime then, this last stroke brings an end to that and the society flourishes under a system which allows private property and freedom of enterprise but safeguards collective interests and establishes social justice.

Chapter VI

THE SPIRITUAL SYSTEM OF ISLAM[1]

WHAT is the spiritual system of Islam and what is its relation with the system of life as a whole? To understand this it is necessary to carefully study the difference between the Islamic concept of spirituality and that of other religions and ideologies. In the absence of a clear understanding of this difference it often happens that when talking about the spiritual system of Islam many of the vague notions associated with the word "spiritual" unconsciously come to one's mind, and in this state of confusion, it becomes difficult for one to comprehend the spiritual system of Islam which not only transcends the dualism of spirit and matter but is the nucleus of the integrated and unified concept of life presented by Islam.

Body-Soul Conflict

The idea which has been most influential in making the climate of thought in philosophy and religion is that body and soul are mutually anatagonistic and conflicting

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1. This is a new and revised translation of a talk given by the author from Radio Pakistan on 16th March, 1948.

and hence they cannot go together in life, and one can develop only at the cost of the other. For the soul, the confines of body and matter are a prison-house; the mundane activities of worldly life are the shackles with which the soul is kept in bondage and its growth is arrested. This has inevitably led to the well-known concept of classifying the universe into the spiritual and the secular. Those who chose the secular path were convinced, at the very outset, that the demands of spirituality could not be complied with and thus went headlong into a sensate outlook in life culminating in stark materialism and hedonism. Consequently all spheres of worldly activity, may they be social, political, economic or cultural were deprived of the light of spirituality and the world was smitten with injustice and tyranny. On the other hand those who wanted to tread the path of spiritual excellence innovated such ways and devices for the development and elevation of the spirit, as to make them "noble outcasts" in this world. They believed that it was not possible to find any process for spiritual growth which might be compatible with a normal life in this world. In their view physical self-denial and mortifications of the flesh were necessary for developing and perfecting the spirit. They invented spiritual exercises and their ascetic practices which would kill one's physical desires and render the body senseless, and even useless. They regarded forests, mountains and other solitary places, as ideal places for spiritual development because in those hide-outs the hustle and bustle of civilization would not interfere in their spiritual practices and nose-gazing

meditations. They could not conceive of the feasibility of any means of spiritual development except by withdrawing themselves from world and its affairs and severing all contacts with society and civilization.

This conflict of body and soul resulted in the evolution of two different ideals for the perfection of man. One of the ideal was of material perfection, which meant that a man should be surrounded by all the material comforts and bounties of the world and regard himself as nothing but an animal, the ideal being to seek dizzy heights in this realm. The result was that he could excel as an animal but the man in him could not seek its flowering. Men learned to fly like birds, swim like crocodile, run like horses and even terrorize and destroy like wolves —but to live like noble human beings they learned not. The other ideal was of the perfection of spiritual life to an extent that the senses are not only subdued and conquered but supra-sensory powers are awakened and the limitations of the sensory world are done away with. With these new conquests men could catch distant voices like powerful wireless sets, see remote objects as one does with the telescope and develop powers through which the mere touch of their hand or focus of their sight may heal the unhealable. This supra-sensory field has been the other avenue of human advancement, but how throbbingly *human* this really is—it is not difficult to visualise!

The Islamic viewpoint differs radically from that of all the prevailing religious and philosophical systems in this regard. According to Islam, God has appointed

man as his "*Khalifah*" (vicegerent) in the universe. He has invested him with certain authority and laid upon it certain responsibilities and obligations for the fulfilment of which He has endowed it with the best and most suitable physical frame. The body has been created with the sole object that the soul should make use of it in the exercise of its authority and the fulfilment of its duties and responsibilities. Hence, the body is not a prison-house for the soul but its workshop or factory, and if there is any possibility for the growth and development of the soul it is only through the use of the power machines and instruments provided by this workshop. Consequently this world is not a place of punishment in which the human soul has been confined somehow but is a field in which God has sent it to work and do his duty toward Him. Innumerable things in this universe have been placed at the disposal of human soul and many more human beings endowed with it have been created in this world to fulfil the duties of this very vicegerency. The natural urges of man have given birth to civilization, culture, and social systems. The spiritual development which is possible in this world should not take the form of man turning his face from the workshop and retiring in some uninhabited corner. Rather, the only form it should take is that man should live and work in it and give the best account of himself. It is in the nature of an examination centre for him; every aspect and sphere of life is, as it were, like a question paper in this test; the home, the family, the neighbourhood, the society, the market-place, the office, the factory, the school, the law

courts, the police station, the parliament, the peace conference and the battlefield, all represent 'question papers' on different subjects which man has been called upon to answer. If he does not take any question paper, or leaves most of the answer-books blank, he is bound to fail in the examination. The only possibility of success and development would lie in man's spending his whole time and giving his whole attention to this examination and to attempt as far as possible to answer all the question papers handed over to him.

Islam rejects and condemns the ascetic view of life, and proposes a set of methods and processes for the spiritual development of man not outside this world but inside it, one that passes through the rough and tumble of life. According to it the real place for the growth, uplift and elevation of the spirit lies right in the midstream of the activity of life and not in solitary places of spiritual hibernation.

Criterion of Moral Development

After this exposition of the basic approach of Islam let us try to discuss the criterion given by Islam to judge the development or decay of the soul. The answer to this question lies in the concept of *Khilafat* which has just been mentioned. In his capacity as the *Khalifah* (vicegerent) of God, man is answerable to Him for all his activities. It is his duty to use all the powers with which he is invested and all the means placed at his disposal in this world, in accordance with the Divine Will. He should utilize to the fullest extent all the faculties and

potentialities bestowed upon him for seeking the approbation of God. In his dealings with other human beings he should adopt an attitude which is approved by God. In brief, all his efforts and energies should be directed towards regulating the affairs of this world in the manner in which God wants them to be regulated. The more admirably a man performs this function, with a sense of responsibility, obedience and humility, and with the object of seeking the pleasure of the Lord, the nearer he will be to God. In Islam, spiritual development is synonymous with nearness to God. Likewise he will remain away from God if he is lazy, slothful, transgressor, rebellious and disobedient. And being away from God signifies, in Islam, the spiritual fall and decay of man.

This explanation should make it clear that from the Islamic point of view the sphere of activity of religious-minded man and of a secular-minded man is the same. Both will work in the same field of action; rather a man of religion will work with greater enthusiasm than a secular-minded person. The man of religion will be as active as the seeker after the world or indeed much more active, in the domestic and social functions of life which extend from the confines of the household to the market square or the venue of international conferences. Of course what will distinguish their course of action will be the nature of their relations with God and the objective which they pursue. Whatever a religious man does, will be with the feeling that he is answerable to God, with the object of securing Divine Pleasure, and in accordance with the Law which God has ordained for him. As against this a

worldly person will be irresponsible, indifferent towards God and will be guided only by his personal motives in his actions. This difference make the whole of the material life of a man of religion a thoroughly spiritual venture and the whole of the life of a worldly person devoid of the spark of spirituality.

Road to Spirituality

Now we are in a position to briefly understand the road which Islam chalks out for the pursuit of spiritual development of man in the context of the mundane life in this world.

The first step in this direction is *Iman* (faith). It means that the idea which should hold supreme in the mind and heart of a man is that: *God alone is his Master, Sovereign and Deity; seeking His Pleasure is the aim of all his endeavours; and His Commands alone constitute the Law of his life.* This should be his firm conviction, not merely cognition of the intellect, but also of the will. Stronger and deeper this conviction, more profound the faith will be, and it will enable man to tread the path of spiritual development with patience and steadfastness and face all the vicissitudes firmly and squarely.

The second stage is of *Itā'at* (obedience) meaning that a man divests himself of his independence altogether, and accepts subservience to God in practice after having proclaimed faith in Him as his creed. This subervience is called *Islam* (obedience) in the language of the Qur'an. Thus, it means that man should not only acknowledge God as his Lord and Sovereign but should actually submit

before Him and fashion his entire life in obedience to the Lord.

The third stage is that of *Taqva* (piety) which consists in a practical manifestation of the faith in God in the mode of daily life. *Taqva* (piety) also consists in desisting from everything which God has forbidden or even that which he disapproves even slightly, in a readiness to undertake all that God has commanded and in observing the distinction between lawful and unlawful, right and wrong, and good and bad in life.

The last and the highest stage is that of *Ihsan* (benediction) which signifies that man has identified his will with the Will of God and has brought it, at least as far as he is concerned, completely in tune with the Divine Will, with the result that he has begun to like what is liked by the Lord and to abhor what is disapproved by Him. Man should, then, not only himself avoid the evils which God does not like to spread on His earth but should use all his power and energy to wipe it off the face of the earth; and he should not merely rest content with adorning himself with the virtues which God desires to flourish but should also strive to establish and propagate them in the world even at the cost of his life. A man who reaches this stage attains the highest pinnacle of spirituality and is nearest to God.

This path of spiritual development is not meant for individuals only but for the communities and nations as well. Like individuals, a community also, after passing through the various stages of spiritual elevation, may reach the ultimate stage of *Ihsan* (benediction) and a

State also with all its administrative machinery may become *Mu'min* (faithful), *Muslim* (obedient), *Muttaqi* (pious) and *Muhsin* (beneficent). In fact, the ideals aimed at by Islam are achieved in a perfect manner only when the whole community moves on this path and a *Muttaqi* and *Muhsin* (pious and beneficent) State comes into existence in this world. That is the acme of civilization where virtue reigns in society and vice is subdued.

Let us now cast a glance at the mechanism of spiritual training which Islam has laid down for preparing individuals and society for this purpose.

The spiritual system of Islam rests on five fundamentals. The first is prayer (*Salat*) which brings man into communion with God five times a day, reviving His remembrance, reiterating His fear, developing His love, reminding man of the Divine Commands again and again, and thus preparing him for obedience to God. These prayers are not to be offered individually but it is obligatory to offer some of them in congregation so that the whole community and the society may be prepared for this process of spiritual development. It is a tool of individual as well as social training in the path of spiritual elevation in Islam.

The second is fasting (*Saum*) which for a full month every year trains a man individually, and the Muslim community as a whole, in piety and self-restraint; enables the society, the rich and the poor alike, to experience the pangs of hunger, and prepares the people to undergo any hardship to seek the Pleasure of God.

The third is *Zakat* which develops the sense of mone-

tary sacrifice, sympathy and cooperation among Muslims. There are people who wrongly interpret *Zakat* as a mere tax although the spirit underlying *Zakat* is entirely different from that which lies at the root of a tax. The real meaning of *Zakat* is sublimity and purification. By using this word, Islam desires to impress on man the fact that, inspired by a true love of God, the monetary help which he renders to his brethren, will uplift and purify his own soul.

The fourth is *Hajj* (Pilgrimage) which aims at fostering universal brotherhood of the faithful as the basis of worship of God, and has culminated in a movement which has been answering the call of truth throughout the centuries and will, God willing, go on answering this call till eternity.

[2]Last is *Jihad*, i.e., exerting oneself to the utmost to disseminate the Word of God and to make it supreme, and remove all the impediments in the way of Islam, be that through the tongue, or the pen or the sword. The idea is to live a life of dedication to the cause of Allah and to sacrifice one's life in the discharge of this mission. This is the type of spirituality which Islam wants to cultivate and not the one that shuns life. It is affirmation of life and its reconstruction on the basis of virtue and piety that Islam stands for, and not the life of denial and self-negation. And this constitutes the chief distinction of this religion.

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2. This paragraph has been added by the Editor and is based on the author's work *Towards Understanding Islam.—Editor.*